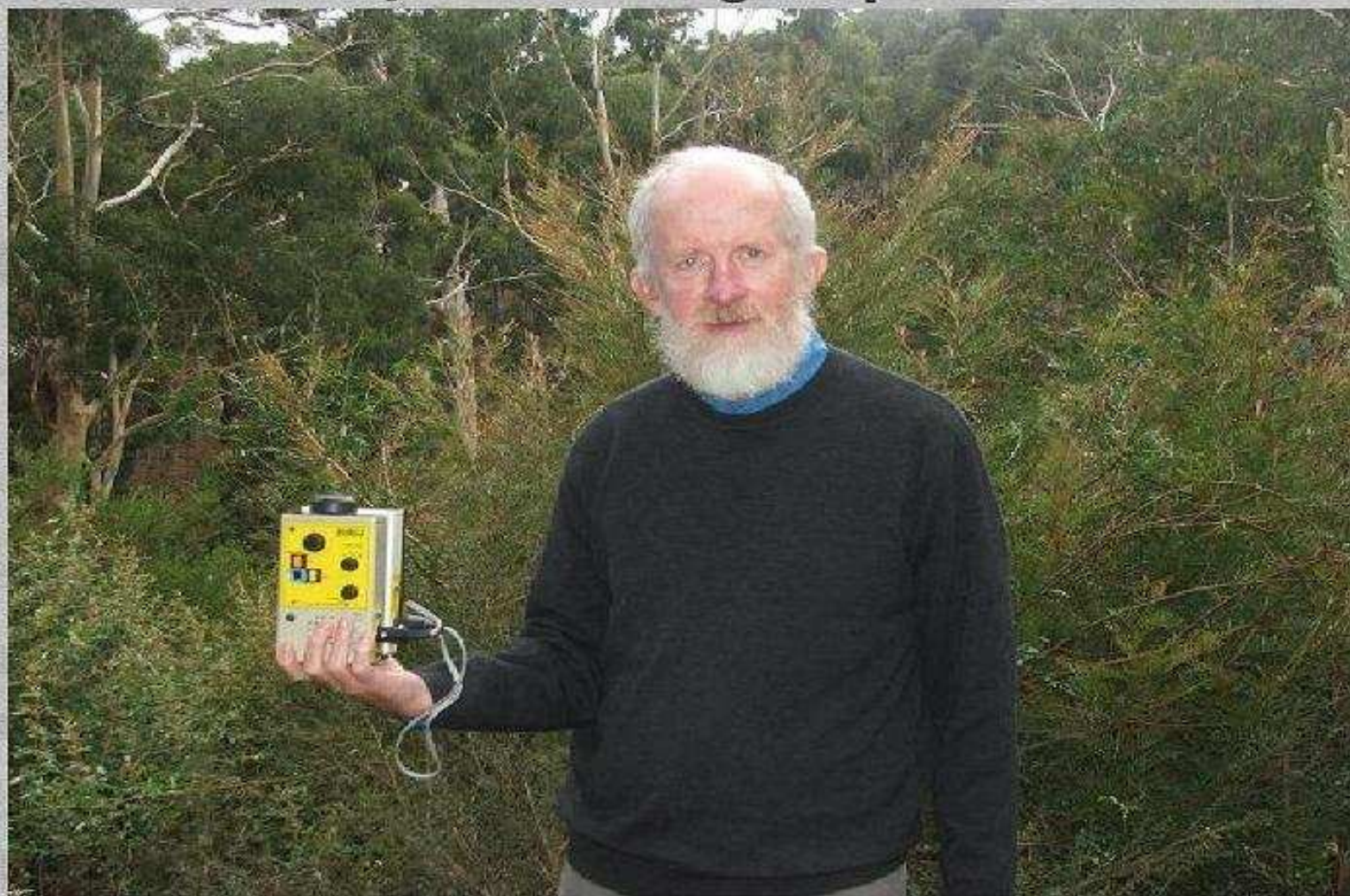


Bat survey reveals eight species in hills



Flinders University bat habitat expert Ken Sanderson

Sue and Sean Delaney from Sinclair's Gully Vineyard knew that they had bats on their property – they just didn't realise how many, or how many different species their 11 hectares of native bushland held.

With the help of Flinders University bat habitat expert Ken Sanderson, the couple have been recording the number of bats flying in their area since the beginning of March.

"You simply don't have any idea how many different species of animals you have on your property until you do something like this," Sue said.

Other studies have been done on the Eco-Certified property to catalogue its native wild flowers as well as bird species. Sue became interested in the bat population after hearing them at night and when she asked around, realised that no one

had a really good idea about how many different species were in the area.

"I thought that we could kick off some sort of bat program," Sue said.

Their study so far has picked up more than 300 bat calls in one area in one night, and shows that 6-8 different species of bats are present on the property. Two of these species are audible to the human ear.

Ken uses a bat detector which picks up the frequency of the bat calls. These frequencies are then assessed and Ken has identified a number of different bat species on the property.

During the first week of study, Ken identified bats with a call base of 43-45 kHz, probably Southern Forest bat *Vespadelus regulus*, one with a call base of 28-32 kHz, probably Gould's Wattled bat *Chalinolobus gouldii*, and White Striped Freetail bat

Tadarida australis, with a call base of 12-16 kHz. Other calls were also identified but were less identifiable as to which species they were.

"We find the information all very exciting," Sue said.

"I used to be an accountant, so I love looking at the numbers that we are being sent through and working through the graphs. We were stunned by just how many species of bats we have in the area"

Sue and Sean plan on undertaking similar research seasonally, in order to develop a good understanding of the bat life on their property.

"So far there doesn't seem to be a consistent pattern," Sue said.

"We suspect that the bats move around depending on where the bugs are, and obviously that changes with the wind and temperature of the night. I'm looking forward to seeing what the remainder of the study shows."